From:	Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH) [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=7EAD25012182469B9FBCA545D1EB2A0D-WALDO, ERIC]
Sent:	8/23/2021 10:43:44 AM
To:	Nick Clegg [█████@fb.com]; Murthy, Vivek (HHS/OASH) [█████████@hhs.gov]
CC:	█████@gmail.com; Brian Rice [█████████@fb.com]
Subject:	RE: Facebook Covid actions

Hi Nick,

I hope this finds you well. Thank you so much for following up with this detailed note. We are grateful for you and your team's attention to the concerns we have been raising and the work to address those ongoing concerns.

Brian and I are also in touch, but we look forward to continuing to move forward together with urgency and solutions during these extraordinary times.

Best,
Eric

From: Nick Clegg <█████@fb.com>
Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 3:08 PM
To: Murthy, Vivek (HHS/OASH) <█████████@hhs.gov>
Cc: Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH) <█████████@hhs.gov>; █████@gmail.com; Brian Rice <█████████@fb.com>
Subject: Facebook Covid actions

Dear Surgeon General

Many thanks again for the recent opportunity to discuss our Covid related work. You asked for an update on existing and new steps that Facebook is taking. As you know, Facebook takes its responsibility during this prolonged, unprecedented public health crisis extremely seriously. In light of our conversation we have been reviewing our efforts to combat COVID-19, and are eager to continue working towards our shared goal of helping more people get vaccinated and limiting the spread of harmful misinformation.

The White House described four recommendations to social media platforms in July, which cover access to authoritative information, enforcement and speed of enforcement, and transparency. Those are priorities we have shared throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In this update, we describe both our historic actions in these areas, as well as new information on boosting access to authoritative information, and further policy work to enable stronger action against persistent distributors of vaccine misinformation. Finally, as agreed at our last meeting, we remain eager to meet with you and/or your team about our ideas regarding data that could potentially be shared with the public.

Elevating access to better information
We continue to review, experiment and adapt to find better ways to increase access to quality information, as we have done since the start of the pandemic:
• We have heard your and others' concern that people should be better able to access authoritative information on our platform. We agree, and have already taken action to make it easier for people to find more authoritative and trusted information in News Feed. We would be happy to describe these efforts to you in a specific briefing.
• We continue to help people directly access accurate information through the COVID Information Center, and will keep adding to this as the situation evolves and especially as guidance for various populations is updated - including when children should get vaccinated, and when the already vaccinated should be getting boosters.
• So far we have connected over 2 billion people globally with resources about COVID, and in the US alone we've helped over 4 million people get vaccinated through our Vaccine Finder, which connects them with appointment information, directions, and contact information.

- We're continuing to refine how we help health partners reach communities with less access to information or lower vaccination rates, leveraging the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and other resources to reach those populations with high-quality, authoritative information.

Limiting Potentially Harmful Information

We continue to improve and refine measures that reduce the spread of potentially harmful content and limit the distribution of actors who share misleading information about COVID and the vaccine:

- We will shortly be expanding our COVID policies to further reduce the spread of potentially harmful content on our platform. These changes will apply across Facebook and Instagram.
  - We are increasing the strength of our demotions for COVID and vaccine-related content that third party fact checkers rate as "Partly False" or "Missing Context." That content will now be demoted at the same strength that we demote any content on our platform rated "False."
  - We are making it easier to have Pages/Groups/Accounts demoted for sharing COVID and vaccine-related misinformation by also counting content removals under our COVID and vaccine-related Community Standards violations towards their demotion threshold.
  - Any entity linked to another entity that is removed for violating our COVID or vaccine misinformation policies will be rendered "non-recommendable" on our platform.
  - Lastly, we will also be strengthening our existing demotion penalties for websites that are repeatedly fact-checked for COVID and vaccine misinformation content shared on our platform. Together, we intend for these policies to further limit the traction that misinformation can get on our platform.
- To date, we've removed over 20 million pieces of content for COVID- and vaccine-related misinformation. We've also taken action against people who repeatedly post content that violates our policies. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have removed over 3,000 accounts, Pages, and groups for repeatedly violating our rules against spreading COVID and vaccine misinformation.
- We've specifically investigated the people sometimes identified in the media as the 'Disinfo Dozen'. We've applied penalties to some of their website domains as well so any posts, including their website content, are moved lower in News Feed. The remaining accounts associated with these individuals are not posting content that breaks our rules, have only posted a small amount of violating content, which we've removed, or are simply inactive. In fact, these 12 people are responsible for about just 0.05% of all views of vaccine-related content on Facebook. This includes all vaccine-related posts they've shared, whether true or false, as well as URLs associated with these people. In total we have removed three dozen Pages, groups and Facebook or Instagram accounts linked to these 12 people, including at least one linked to each of the 12 people, for violating our policies.
- We continue to notify people when content that they have interacted with is removed for violating our policies on COVID and vaccines.
- We have implemented and continue to experiment with signals that we can use -- around specific kinds of sharing behavior, specific page types, and specific types of language, among other factors -- to demote content that we predict will contain low quality information.

Increasing Transparency

We will continue to seek to ensure the actions we are taking (as well as misses) are apparent and discernible by people who don't work at Facebook. We are especially keen to discuss with you what form shared data could take in order to be most valuable to analysts and researchers, both inside and outside of government.

In terms of what we're doing now:

- We already have a wide amount of data available for analysis through our academic partnerships like FORT, but we are keenly aware that more kinds of data, or more specific cuts, may be valuable to the people actively looking to study this area more closely. We also share data with the public through our quarterly Community Standards Enforcement Report releases, most recently this past Wednesday, and have also just launched a Widely View Content Report to further increase transparency with the public.
- We are currently deep in internal discussions to identify the best ways we can share with the public information about some of the most widely viewed content on Facebook. We're actively considering how we can best share that information so that it is valuable to the public and to researchers, which to the best of our knowledge no other company provides.
- We're also looking at ways we can produce more data and deeper data sets that can create richer opportunities for researchers to analyse the reach of various kinds of content.
- We have examined the distribution patterns of the so-called 'Disinfo Dozen' (as above - https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/taking-action-against-vaccine-misinformation-superspreaders/).
- To advance public understanding of how social media and behavioral sciences can be leveraged to improve the health of communities around the world, we've supported researchers attempting to understand social media's

role in the ongoing pandemic. One report has already been published, and we are pleased to see that social media can have positive impacts on public health needs. There are other researchers we are supporting, and look forward to reviewing their work as it is completed and peer reviewed.

- While separate from the issue of content online, researchers are also able to access our COVID-19 Trends and Impact Survey, which is a global survey gathering insights about symptoms, testing, mask-wearing, social distancing, mental health, vaccine acceptance, reasons for vaccine hesitancy, and more. We believe this is the largest public health survey in history. Over 70 million responses from more than 200 countries and territories have been collected, and the data can be broken down by self-reported demographic information like gender and race as well as by hyper-local geographic regions. The data is available in near real-time and is collected off-platform by academic partners at the University of Maryland (UMD) and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). Academic and nonprofit researchers are able request access to non-public, non-aggregated survey data for their research.

I hope this is a useful update, pending further work and discussions we will continue to update you and your teams and we are happy to meet and discuss any of the work we have outlined here. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my team with any further questions.

Best wishes,

Nick